

Derek. Derek had planned to propose to Andrea that night.

She had a passion for makeup and hoped to use this passion to help cancer patients feel beautiful. Andrea will always be remembered for her free spirit and positive outlook.

I would like to extend my condolences to Andrea's family and friends. Please note that the city of Las Vegas, the State of Nevada, and the whole country grieve with you.

□ 1930

CLASSIFIED MEMO

(Mr. LAMALFA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend the House Intelligence Committee for voting to release the classified memo alleging misconduct by senior FBI officials involved in the Russian probe. Chairman NUNES has done a great job of steering this through evenhandedly, with dignity, and with the ultimate goal of fairness in mind.

I also thank the President for approving the release of the memo, as well.

The contents of this document are troubling. I previously joined many of my colleagues in urging the committee to release this memo to the public, as they have demanded.

This is not an attempt to undermine anything. This document outlines some very serious misconduct at a very high level at a powerful government agency, and the American people have the right to know.

Contrary to the narrative created before its release, this memo in no way jeopardizes our national security but, indeed, shines a light on a lot of misconduct.

As promised, the committee today approved releasing the Democratic version of the memo. That is fair. We will let the people compare them.

THREATENING WORKERS' RIGHTS

(Mr. TONKO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TONKO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express grave concerns about the Supreme Court case *Janus v. AFSCME* Council 31.

This case threatens the freedom of working people to join together in strong unions to fight for their right to fair pay, safe working conditions, and a voice in the decisions that will affect their retirement security, healthcare, and the fate of their families.

Since 1980, incomes for most Americans have risen just 1 percent, while incomes for the wealthiest among us rose by 204 percent.

Incidentally, organized labor membership has seen a precipitous decline in this time period.

I want to recognize some of my own constituents who are fighting back against the *Janus* case, so-called right to fire laws, and the antiworker agenda:

Lorraine Aumic of Schenectady from Local 688;

Bryan Schaeffer of Delanson from Local 886 in Schenectady;

Michele Kuiber of Amsterdam from Local 671; and

Judi Aubin of Clifton Park from Local 655.

I thank them for their leadership in fighting for an increase in the household income for the great majority of Americans coming through the strength of unions.

A BETTER DEAL

(Mr. SWALWELL of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SWALWELL of California. Mr. Speaker, in this Chamber last week, the President came and touted that the stock market was roaring and the unemployment rate was down. Today, he called us traitors for not applauding those numbers.

A couple of days later, Speaker RYAN said a secretary at a public high school noticed that her pay had gone up \$1.50 a week because of the GOP tax cuts.

Mr. Speaker, the economy is not the stock market. It is not the unemployment rate. It is us. It is how we are doing. The stock market only matters if you are able to invest in it; and the unemployment rate only counts if you have a job you can count on, where your paycheck grows and you can plan for retirement and save for a better future.

Mr. Speaker, the measurement of the economy is how we are doing. If you are only getting six quarters from a tax cut that gives millions to the richest among us, you are not doing very well. You deserve a much better deal.

ECONOMIC JUSTICE IN THE BLACK COMMUNITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PITTENGER). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. EVANS) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. EVANS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include any extraneous material on the subject of my Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Pennsylvania?

There was no objection.

Mr. EVANS. Mr. Speaker, I stand here representing the Congressional Black Caucus and our chairman, CEDRIC RICHMOND, who has initiated

this particular Special Order for the Congressional Black Caucus to have this opportunity to speak to the issues specifically connected to the African-American community.

As a result of the chairman's leadership, we have laid out an agenda that we think is very appropriate to lay out. We think it is important that all of our constituents, particularly all Americans, recognize that the Congressional Black Caucus has solutions.

There is a document here that was put together under the leadership of Chairman RICHMOND. When the President stated sometime in August of 2016: "What do you have to lose?" the chairman came up with the idea of a document that we would lay out, "We Have a Lot to Lose: Solutions to Advance Black Families in the 21st Century."

Over this next year or so, we will be talking about solutions relating to African-American communities. We think that African-American communities, like all Americans, should recognize that there are solutions to some of these challenges.

With the President giving his speech last week on the state of the Union, the topic that we will talk about today is economic justice in the Black community. The topic, again, is economic justice in the Black community.

First, I thank my wonderful colleagues for joining me here today to speak about economic justice in the Black community, an important topic to us all.

The Black community has a lot to lose under the current administration. The racial wealth gap is widening. The GOP tax cut bill will not help, especially when the Speaker of the House tweets about a \$1.50 increase and actually believes that this is a fair solution to our Nation's problems.

Costco membership for the middle class and others in need, new yachts and Gulfstreams for millionaires and billionaires—that is just not right. We are in the business of doing no harm.

To add to this, the President stands up and brags that the unemployment rate for Blacks is at the lowest, even while the unemployment rate for Black Americans actually went up a whole percent last month according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. We did not hear from the President on that.

You can't take credit for the good, but not accept the bad. It is all about accountability and credibility, Mr. Speaker. There is nothing to brag about.

To gain wealth comparison to White high school dropouts, Black people have to complete high school and some college, which is a very sad fact. This means that Black Americans need to invest more resources and time to achieve the same resources as White citizens, to make the same level of investments.

Generally, the typical Black American has little room for error. The demands placed on Black families to generate income while navigating the

problems that always arise are numbing.

Black Americans have levels of net worth that are one-tenth the net worth of White Americans.

Black Americans have only 8 percent of their wealth in businesses. Research shows that Black entrepreneurs have higher wealth levels and higher levels of wealth mobility than the Black non-entrepreneur. The lack of wealth makes it harder to start and maintain a business.

According to data from various reports, including the Census Bureau, the Federal Reserve's survey of small businesses, and the Kauffman Foundation, Black-owned businesses are more reliant on their own investment in their businesses because access to capital from external sources is too difficult to obtain.

To give you some context of what is at stake in our neighborhoods nationwide, I represent a district with a poverty rate of 26 percent. That means 196,000 people in my district are at the poverty level.

We know that one of the best solutions to addressing poverty is quality of jobs.

Let me repeat that, Mr. Speaker. We know that one of the best solutions to addressing poverty is the quality of jobs.

The President and his administration talk a big game about creating jobs and lowering unemployment, but we all know too well that this is not the reality in our neighborhoods nationwide. A 2015 CFPB report found that 15 percent of Black Americans are credit invisible, meaning that they have no or limited credit.

Black Americans have higher levels of student debt, on average. Forty percent of Black Americans between 25 and 55 hold student loan debt. Black Americans have higher levels of those debt loads, holding an average of \$43,725.

Let me repeat that. They have an average of \$43,725 in student debt, compared to an average of \$31,367 for Whites.

Our Historically Black Colleges and Universities must be capable of delivering a world-class education and continuing to attract top-notch students.

Let's talk about the solutions to economic injustice. Let's talk about the solutions.

In this document, we talk about the solutions. For example, don't cut taxes for the superrich while others are struggling to make ends meet. Adopt a fair Tax Code that doesn't pick winners or losers.

Work to implement the Congressional Black Caucus 10-20-30 formula all across all agencies. This bold and innovative idea would require Federal agencies to commit 10 percent of their budget to the 485 counties where 20 percent or more of the population have been living below poverty lines for 30 years.

We should also address food insecurity by providing access to healthy, af-

fordable food. Mr. Speaker, more than 30 million Americans live more than a mile from the nearest grocery store.

Let's be clear: our food policy is our foreign policy. Our food policy is our foreign policy. When America helps with food and development aid around the world, it sends a signal that we are leaders in the global campaign to help end hunger.

In addition, as a member of the Small Business Committee and the ranking member of the Subcommittee on Economic Growth, Tax and Capital Access, it is critical that we support and expand small business and entrepreneurship opportunities.

One of the things the President can do is increase the budget of the Minority Business Development Agency instead of slashing its budget, as it did last year. That is one of the solutions that we have in this document.

We can also increase the Small Business Administration's budget, while ensuring the Small Business Development Centers are capable of providing assistance expanding the SBA 7(a) Microloan program, which would give small businesses \$50,000 to start or grow their firms, a capital fusion that can help individuals who have ideas and a dream but no cash.

Mr. Speaker, every day, graduates of our fine universities in Pennsylvania go to work but still find themselves behind or just keeping up with their student loans. This is an opportunity to show support for entrepreneurs by forgiving part of the student loan debt in terms of entrepreneurs.

The President should also make new markets tax credits permanent. He should also condition the fintech charters of compliance with truth in lending and equal credit access, using a template similar to that in the Community Reinvestment Act.

He should set up the 21st Century Technology Fund and reauthorize the improvement of the Community Development Block Grant program.

Mr. Speaker, the chairman, whom I will later introduce, presented this document to the President, along with the executive branch.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PAYNE), someone whom I have known for an awful long time. He knows a lot about economic development. I know that he has led the effort on business development.

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, let me first thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. EVANS) for hosting tonight's Special Order. I am glad to see that his celebrating allowed them to get here on time, since his team was victorious yesterday in the Super Bowl.

□ 1945

Let's see. For 84 percent of the American voters, the economy is the number one issue to care about. Tonight's Special Order is made even more important after the huge drop in the stock market today. But, of course, the stock

market is not the only measure of a healthy economy or economics of our community.

Building wealth matters. Wealth is what families accumulate and pass down generation after generation. It is the house you pay for and give to your children so they can grow their families without paying rent.

It is the retirement fund you live off of and pass on to your children so they can pay for their own children's college education. By building wealth, we are building a safety net that allows us to start a business or survive if we lose our jobs. Yes, building wealth matters, but the Black community has been shut out from building its wealth.

More than 25 percent of the Black community has zero net worth or has a negative net worth, and the median Black family is worth 12 times less than the median White family.

Why is that?

One reason for the vast majority of households in the United States, two-thirds of the family's wealth is tied up in the value of their home. That means the racial gap in wealth is mostly a racial gap in housing, and the housing wealth gap is not by chance.

For decades, Federal law and policy favored Whites and discriminated against Blacks. For decades, private banks discouraged lending to Black people, and for decades, restrictive covenants outright prevented Black people from owning homes in certain areas of town.

There are young people today struggling to rent apartments in major cities because, in 1950, their grandfather was denied a loan by a bank because of his race. The young people of color are, in essence, forced to play catchup with their White colleagues.

To build wealth in Black communities, we need to work towards ending the racial unemployment gap. As the President has repeatedly proclaimed, Black unemployment has been dropping for the past 8 years, reaching a historic low this year, but that statistic doesn't tell the whole story.

While unemployment has gone down, the gap between Black and White pay has not been going down. Black men only earn 70 cents an hour for every dollar a White individual makes. As long as that remains true, our communities will continue to struggle economically.

To close the economic gap, it requires us to close the wage gap. Workers everywhere need to be free to bargain collectively. We need to make unions and their workers stronger, not weaker. We need to raise the minimum wage for both tipped and untipped workers. We need to strengthen the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

These basic steps will help generate Black wealth by closing the wage gap. Those are a few of the short-term solutions to closing the wealth gap and the wage gap among people who are in the workforce today. But we need a long-

term plan. We need to increase the participation and the success of Black, Latino, and female students in careers that rely on science, technology, engineering, and math.

Fewer than half of all high schools in the United States offer calculus. Many high schools across the country don't even offer physics or chemistry. And the students who don't have access to senior-level science or math classes are disproportionately students of color or low-income students. This is a national disgrace.

This disparity continues through college, where only 4 percent of engineering majors are Black or African American, and only 8 percent are Hispanic or Latino.

Look, the world around us is undergoing rapid change and will continue to evolve, and there is a growing gap between jobs that are in high demand and the people who have the skills to fill them. Over the next 10 years, 80 percent of careers will require a deep understanding of STEM skills, but our young women, Black youth, and people of color are being left behind. They are among the least likely to pursue studies in the most in-demand STEM fields, despite the fact that they are among the fastest growing demographics in the country.

It is our duty to create an educational system that encourages young people, whatever their backgrounds, to dream big, to achieve big. Only then will we be positioned to create a future in which technology reflects the strength of America's diverse communities.

I would just like to say we are here tonight to discuss this matter that has plagued our community for decades, as I stated, but it is time for us to level the playing field once and for all, for all families to be able to benefit from what this country has to offer, the great American Dream.

It is a dream for everyone, and we are bent on making sure that all communities have an opportunity to benefit from this great Nation's wealth.

Mr. EVANS. Mr. Speaker, I would continue to yield to the gentleman for an answer to a question.

I am going to—since he is from the great State of New Jersey—say that I heard the President in his State of the Union address last week. And this topic is about economic justice in the Black community, and I think Mr. PAYNE did an excellent job in laying out very specifically on the issue about the need for increase of the minimum wage.

I yield to Mr. PAYNE so he can speak to that a little bit and talk about how he thinks that would provide economic justice, particularly in the Black community. I was, as a matter of fact, sitting right next to Mr. PAYNE. I don't think I heard the President speak anything about the minimum wage.

Did I miss something?

I just want to know if I missed something that he was speaking on.

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, if Mr. EVANS missed it, I missed it because I

don't believe the President mentioned it at all.

Look, I mean, people who are struggling in this country making \$7 an hour, \$8 an hour, \$9 an hour, \$10 an hour, it does not meet their essential needs. It is not enough money to live in this Nation, to have decent housing.

Sure, you can make \$7 or \$8 an hour, but what are you going to be able to afford as a home?

Sure, you can make \$7 or \$8 an hour, but what does your children's future look like in terms of saving money for education?

You are using everything primarily to feed and to clothe them.

It has been discussed over the past 5 to 6 years that a minimum of \$15 is needed for people to survive in this country. So we need to get up off of this high horse that my colleagues on the other side of the aisle said: Well, just pull yourself up by your bootstraps.

Those days are over. And we were never given the bootstraps to hold onto. There is always, always something in our way.

Anytime an African-American family finds themselves in a position to move forward, the goalpost is moved and it is further away, the rules are changed. Every time we get to a point where there might be equality, somehow there are different issues which don't allow you to move forward as your counterparts in the majority population. It is wrong and it needs to stop. We need to continue to bring light to it as a Congressional Black Caucus.

It is our duty, as the voice of people in this country of color, to make sure we know that this travesty is going on, we understand it, we see it, we are not going to tolerate it anymore, and we are going to have to fix it. That is the way I feel.

Mr. EVANS. Mr. Speaker, I really appreciate Mr. PAYNE's comments because what I am hearing Mr. PAYNE say is we should give people a raise.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to Mr. PAYNE for any additional comments he would like to make.

Mr. PAYNE. They have to. It is the only way for people in this country to make it.

Mr. EVANS. Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. PAYNE very much for his comments.

Someone who is from a great State that has done—was a mayor in a State that manufactured and did a huge opportunity in creating wealth, I couldn't think of a better person to speak about this subject: economic justice in the Black community. She knows a lot about this issue. She has been hands-on about it. She has been in the forefront. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the congresswoman from Michigan (Mrs. LAWRENCE), a great colleague from the 14th Congressional District.

Mrs. LAWRENCE. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congressman EVANS for his strong representation of his constituents of the Second District of Pennsyl-

vania and his leadership and support of civil rights.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to address racial inequality with America's wealth gap. As we continue to celebrate Black History Month, we remember victories such as the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Voting Rights Act of 1965, and the Fair Housing Act of 1968. We can look back and celebrate these victories that brought us closer to the American principle of liberty and justice for all.

But the fight for equality, fairness, and justice continues. I am proud to stand with my colleagues of the Congressional Black Caucus to call for true economic justice for the Black community. Still, today, Mr. Speaker, in 2018, Black people in America have to earn a high school education, a high school diploma, and complete some time in college to catch up to the wage of White high school dropouts.

The Black-White wage gap is larger today than it was in 1979. This tragic truth does not affect Black men and women the same. Since the year 2000, young Black women have been hit the hardest. However, the racial wealth gap is even greater. The average wealth for White families is seven times higher than the average wealth for Black families.

Mr. Speaker, with facts like this, no wonder many find it difficult to stand and applaud President Trump's belief that there is a trend of lower Black unemployment rates. Lower unemployment rates does not address this imbalance of wealth and opportunity, and backward policies do not deserve our cheers.

When we have an administration that puts forth policies that would eliminate programs to support minority businesses, drain the Black labor pool by doubling down on the war on drugs and mass incarceration, put forth a tax plan that gives billions to corporations and the wealthiest while leaving crumbs for the hardworking middle class, Mr. Speaker, this does not deserve our applause. Certainly, under this administration, African Americans and minorities have a lot to lose.

□ 2000

We heard that often during the campaign: "What do you have to lose?"

Today, this administration is surprised we are not standing and applauding.

A chain is only as strong as its weakest link. The strength of America is at its best when we are all strong.

Mr. Speaker, that is why this fight from the Black Caucus—we are raising our voices—this isn't just about Black America; this is about America. We are a country that the stronger each and every one of us is—regardless of our race, our religion, or where we came from—if we are in America and we are Americans, if we are all strong, the United States of America is strong.

Equality is smart economics, and justice for all is our American way.

Today, we stand and call on this administration and this Congress to fight to make America strong, to make America the best it can be. We call for equality and we call for economic justice for all.

Mr. EVANS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to do a colloquy with my colleague on something that really got my attention; what she said about that chain. I would like her to talk about that chain, what that means in real life and what it means when it is not functioning.

What happens when that chain is not strong?

Mrs. LAWRENCE. Mr. Speaker, let me use the example of mass incarceration.

In my State and in this budget in Congress, we are constantly cutting programs for education. In America, if you do not educate a child, their choices are very limited. Statistics have shown that the lower the education, the higher the rate of incarceration.

I will share with the gentleman that if we truly want to reduce the cost of mass incarceration, if we truly want a workforce that is trained and available to address economic opportunities and invest in technology, and ensure that we are paying taxes and growing our tax base, it will be more efficient to invest in education.

But, instead, we systematically, with budgets and cutting funds, empower the prison system, while at the same time create a disadvantage for people who then become what we so often hear: a burden to society, social welfare, and all these other things.

When you create the opportunity to provide leadership to say, "We, in America, understand an educated American is an economic advantage," and we have systematically ignored that—we sit here as if every child in America is getting equal education—it is not a reality. It should be an outcry from every CEO in America. All of these corporations are getting billions of dollars in tax cuts.

Instead of saying, "Oh, do you know what, we are going to open up a new factory," or "We are going to do this," they should say that in conjunction with, "We are going to make sure that every child who is our customer, every community will be able to improve the educational system." Because the larger our work base, the more powerful our corporation and our economy becomes.

Why do you think these corporations go overseas and say they have to go to other countries to get workers?

And, excuse me, you don't see the reality slapping you in the face when you have these children who are not educated, and you have school systems that don't have adequate books and technology to allow this child to reach their highest potential?

That is a weak link.

And this America that says that we are one of the best economies in the

world, we are being attacked every day because our workforce is diminishing because we are not providing education that is competitive with other countries.

Mr. EVANS. Mr. Speaker, I think the gentlewoman may have heard our colleague from New Jersey (Mr. PAYNE) talk a little bit about the minimum wage and raising the minimum wage.

How would she see that aspect of raising the minimum wage being a part of strengthening that chain?

Mrs. LAWRENCE. Mr. Speaker, when you have what we call the working poor—they are going to work every day—think about a mother who is raising a family. She is not asking for a handout. She is actually going to work every day. Some of them are working two jobs and still cannot provide the basics of food, shelter, and clothing for their children. And then when she says, "I need help," they say, "Oh, these handouts, this social welfare these people are asking for," when these are people who are working every day to achieve the American Dream, not to have luxuries, but to have the basics, the minimum wage is a beginning. But you tie that to education. We must address that.

Many of these individuals, who have never committed a crime—they are not criminals, they are not bad people—they did not get the education that prepared them, and now they are working, they are trying, they are pursuing the dream of: "If I work hard every day, if I do the work and show up and be a good employee, I will be able to provide for my family." That is not a reality. In America, we should be ashamed of ourselves to have people working and still considered poor in America.

Mr. EVANS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for her comments. I greatly appreciate it.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. RICHMOND), the chairman of the Congressional Black Caucus, who is really not a stranger to this topic of economic justice in the Black community. He has been leading this caucus for the last year and he has been very consistent about the need to address economic justice. He understands, from his perspective, from the caucus perspective, the importance that the best poverty buster is economic justice.

Mr. RICHMOND. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Pennsylvania for yielding to me.

Mr. Speaker, let me take a moment to congratulate the city of Philadelphia, the great people of Pennsylvania, on winning the Super Bowl last night. And I will just say, as we talk about economic justice, one of the reasons why Philadelphia or the Eagles were able to win the Super Bowl was not just because of their outstanding player Malcolm Jenkins, which they all got from the New Orleans Saints, but part of the reason why is because the rules are the same for everybody. When the

rules are the same for everybody, then you get rewarded for your hard work, your dedication, your sacrifice, and all of those things. Last night was the reward of the Eagles' hard work, dedication, and sacrifice.

The problem with what we face in this country is that the rules are not the same for everybody, which is why it takes an African American to have a high school diploma and some college education to earn what a White dropout makes. And, look, it is what it is. It is the rules we find ourselves. But in a great nation such as this, you correct it so that the playing field is even and that the rules are the same.

Some people are born on third base. They hit a single and think they hit a home run and earned all of their success. So often in minority communities, we go to the plate already with two strikes, and we are expected to hit that same home run or that same single.

Well, this morning, as I prepared to say good-bye to my 3-year-old—little Cedric—and drop him off at daycare and go to the airport so that I could fly up here and do the people's work, I noticed that the CBC was getting criticized for not standing when the President said that African-American unemployment was at an all-time low. I am grown. I accept what I do. To my colleague from Pennsylvania: No, I didn't stand.

But for anyone who is listening—and I hope that the White House is—why don't you just call me and ask me why I didn't stand?

Because I will tell you, and I don't care if it hurts some feelings, ruffles some feathers, or send people in a little tizzy.

I didn't stand because we haven't done enough. I didn't stand because Black unemployment has been going down since 2011 at a steady rate. The decline this past year is less than the decline in other years.

But if I stood and applauded, it would make someone think that I was happy. It would make someone think that he was doing a good job.

I also didn't stand because I just didn't believe the words that I was hearing.

I also didn't stand because I could hear the words of my grandmother in the back of my head saying: "Baby, he means you no good."

But part of the other reasons why I didn't stand was because, in a country as great as this, I was sitting there that night—and I am a Southern boy—and I was thinking about how cold it was outside while we were in here listening to the State of the Union; and when the weather gets really cold and it is snowing or it is raining and cold, I try to bundle up so I can hurry up and get in my car, and then hurry up and get in the office, and then hurry up and get in the house so that I don't have to be exposed to the elements long.

Do you know what I realized?

That there are people in this great country who go to bed and wake up

outside. We can't consider ourselves a great nation if that is true.

The other thing I realized is that there are mothers who go to work every day and they bust their tails to provide for their kids, and at the end of the week, they still don't have enough to make ends meet. But she is working for a corporation whose profits are at an all-time high, while her wages are at an all-time low. She is making the corporation a profit, but she can't pay for the basic needs for her family. You can't be a great country when that happens.

So what does she do?

Not to mention that she has to work two jobs to earn what a White male makes. So she is working two jobs to make what a White male makes. Then we criticize her for not educating her children. Well, she can't help with homework. She is working her second job.

But in this country, we have to be better than that. So to stand and give a State of the Union and just look at the unemployment rate really means you are looking at it like a 3-year-old.

Part of our job as the CBC—the Congressional Black Caucus—is to educate, which is why we did prepare this document.

And, look, White House, if it is too long, if it is too complicated, if the words are too big, call me. I will send you the cliff notes version. Lord knows I used them once or twice in school.

But I will tell you: If you want to know our solutions, it is on page 17. If you want to hear us talk about economic justice and how to improve the economy, it is on page 31. If you want to know how to improve education and the workforce and healthcare, those are pages 40, 43, and 49.

If you want to talk about rural America—because, as the CBC, I want to make this crystal clear to the country: Yes, we are the Congressional Black Caucus, but we work for the entire country. So when we start talking about solutions, we are talking about solutions for rural America, like investing in infrastructure, broadband, and all those things, so rural people, both Black or White or any other race, can succeed.

But what most of the country doesn't know is, yes, we have 48 members of the Congressional Black Caucus; we represent 78 million people, but only 17 million of those are African Americans. So we fight for the entire country. So when we marched in the civil rights movement, and when the CBC fought for a civil rights bill, and a voting rights bill, they weren't just fighting for African Americans. First of all, they were fighting to redeem this country's soul because it was so lost. We find ourselves at a similar place in history where we are fighting to redeem this country. We are here to help you save you from yourself because in this country, with the wealth that we have, we should not have the poverty.

□ 2015

I want to be clear about another thing. I applaud the fact that people make a lot of money. Look, I think it is absolutely phenomenal.

There is a guy in California right now building a 100,000-square-foot house for \$500 million. God bless him, and God bless this country that he is able to make that much money.

But you can't tell me that, in the same country where he is able to do that, we can't take care of a hungry 3-year-old or a hungry 4-year-old or help that mother who is working two jobs to make ends meet. And because she is getting subsidized rent, we have the nerve to call her lazy?

No one in this body works two jobs. First of all, we are prohibited. But we don't work two jobs, and there are too many families all across this country where people are working two and three jobs.

You hear me talk about civil rights often, and you hear me talk about Dr. King often—not only because he was one of the greatest leaders ever in this country; not only because he went to Morehouse College, the greatest institution in this country; but because his words had meaning and, more importantly, his actions and his deeds were those that changed this country.

So let's think, as April 4 we will celebrate the 50th anniversary of his assassination in Memphis at the Lorraine Motel. What people don't realize about Dr. King, he was down there fighting for sanitation workers. He was fighting for people who woke up every day, got on the back of a truck. We call them "hoppers." They would hop on and hop off the truck, put your trash in it, worked very hard, but they didn't work with decent wages, decent work conditions, or anything else.

He was down there not fighting for chronic voters, not pandering to a base, not trying to appeal to what is popular; he was down there fighting for garbage men and garbage women so that they could work with dignity and respect. That is what the CBC embodies.

So I am so glad that tonight the gentleman is leading this Special Order Hour on economic justice. I know I went all over the place, but I want people to understand.

First of all, I am not apologetic for not standing. Make me. Make me stand. And I am not talking about in a physical sense. That is too easy. All these sergeant-at-arms around here and all the security that the President has, yeah, they can make me stand, but make me want to stand.

See, that is what makes this country great. Anybody, any little infant in this country can criticize. There are a whole bunch of people who criticize. Oh, they won't stand for the Pledge of Allegiance or the Star-Spangled Banner. What makes this country great is that they don't have to if they want to protest.

But this country is so great, we should make people want to stand. We

should make those players feel not that they are sons of Bs, but that they are contributing members of society and that we cherish every community; that we are going to actually talk about police misconduct, not just from the White House where we get—you are in the White House. You get to beat up on the FBI, the CIA. You get to beat up on all law enforcement, and nobody says a word. But if one little football player says that police relations in my community are so bad that, no, I am not going to talk about the FBI publicly, I am not going to criticize them, I am just going to, in a very reverent way, take a knee to show that I am not happy with police community relations in my community, all of a sudden they are despicable people. But you can stand and sit in the White House and tweet about the FBI, CIA, and everyone else, and all of a sudden it is acceptable.

So, look, the rules should be the same for everybody. The solutions we have in this book, like investing in the minority business development agencies, those would make a real difference in the lives of African Americans achieving better. But what did this budget do? Propose to cut them out completely.

So we just have to be very cognizant of where we are, what we are doing, and know that you have to have a plan. Economic injustice will not cure itself because it wasn't created overnight.

I know I am probably way over the heads of all the people in the White House, but we learn in physics that, if a ball is rolling downhill, the only way you stop it from rolling downhill is to apply equal or greater force in the opposite direction.

So if we know that discrimination and racism and injustice has been involved in our economic system since the slaves built this hallowed building, then we know that that discrimination and that inequality has been rolling down the hill for centuries. So if it has been rolling down the hill for centuries, then we need an equal or greater force to meet it.

That is what this document is. It is saying, "Mr. President, implement these policies." That will be the equal or greater force to meet that. All of a sudden, we have an equal playing field and we have a chance to make this a more perfect Union, what we all strive for, so that little Black boys and little Black girls can be judged by their character, not by the color of their skin. That is what we strive for. Too often, too many politicians forget it because they are pandering to chronic voters and to a base.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania, from Philadelphia, who has on his green tie celebrating his Super Bowl victory.

Mr. EVANS. Mr. Speaker, I want to follow up on something that the gentleman said that sort of registers.

He says this April it will be 50 years since Dr. King's assassination. I am interested in the gentleman's perspective

as he looks at that 50 years. And the gentleman and I both have this honor of sitting in this great House and what it means.

But that economic justice aspect, as the gentleman looks back and thinks about—and I am glad he brought up the issue about fighting for the sanitation workers and what Dr. King was doing. So if the gentleman is looking back and looking where we are today, speak to a little bit of where he thinks we are, because just last Tuesday we sat in this House and we heard the President give the State of the Union.

The gentleman heard what the President said in his State of the Union, and we know about Dr. King, that issue about economic justice in the Black community. If the gentleman had to measure it, where are we?

I yield to the gentleman from Louisiana.

Mr. RICHMOND. Mr. Speaker, I tell the gentleman from Pennsylvania, how you describe the state of our Union depends on what ZIP Code you live in in this country these days. There are ZIP Codes where the state of our Union is great, where people are overjoyed that the stock market was over 25,000, that they are bustling because of the economic recovery that was started under President Obama. They are doing very well, and they did very well as we ended the Great Recession.

But there are too many people in other ZIP Codes who still find themselves without raises in the last 10 years, but the cost of gas, the cost of milk, the cost of electricity, all those costs are going up. All of your expenses are going up, but your salary is staying the same. That does not make for a balanced balance sheet. That makes for a deficit, which is why we talked about and challenged the tax cut that we just did.

We just spent \$1.4 trillion. BERNIE SANDERS' free college plan was only \$800 billion. We could have done his free college plan and still had \$600 billion left over to do infrastructure or something else, because the best way out of poverty and the best way to do these things is through investing in education.

So the state of our Union is divided, is fractured; for vulnerable people, it is scary. They are anxious. For too many people, they are angry.

We have pitched this whole idea in this country that if you are poor and you are White, the only reason you are poor is because minorities keep cutting the line and keep taking what should be yours. And to perpetuate that doesn't help poor White people or poor Black people because, at the end of the day, they are both poor, and we need to realize that that is not what this country is about, and we need to uplift both.

That is why I would say the state of our Union is in paralysis, and we are paralyzed in a broke state. But it is our job, the Members of this House, all 435, to figure out ways to come together to

fix it. We know we have very specific ideas. We know that they have very specific ideas. They won the majority, and elections have consequences.

But if you want to talk to me in good faith about finding a solution, then be open to hearing what you don't want to hear. I am open to not getting everything I want because I know that we didn't win the House.

But this institution has to be better than that. I hope we can come together at some point and realize that spending money on American families is actually an investment that gives you a return, and it is not just wasteful spending.

Mr. EVANS. Mr. Speaker, how much time is remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SMUCKER). The gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. EVANS) has 8 minutes remaining.

Mr. EVANS. Mr. Speaker, if I could ask the gentleman another question, because this issue of economic justice in the Black community is what I view as probably the issue, because we heard our colleagues from Michigan and New Jersey talk about that gap that exists.

There is somebody out there listening to you or listening to us tonight, and if you turn around and you are speaking to them, what sense of hope can you give to them that you see some way of addressing this economic justice? Is there something specifically that you can say to them that gives a little sense of optimism about that growing gap?

I mean, I ride in cabs and all, and they wonder if there is a fundamental difference.

So I ask the gentleman, as the leader of the Congressional Black Caucus, all 48, 49 of us, as you think about it and you have been here, what can you say to them about this economic justice issue that we have today?

I yield to the gentleman from Louisiana.

Mr. RICHMOND. Well, first of all, I think they should take some comfort and glean some hope from the fact that we are sitting here in the House of Representatives talking about economic justice on this Monday night because we are concerned about it and because we are offering solutions to it.

Hopefully, some in the majority, maybe in the House, maybe in the Senate, maybe in the White House, will extend a hand to say we are interested in hearing your ideas; we will read your proposals; let's see if we can find some middle ground.

This is not just about African Americans. This is about American people. There are too many people in this country who are busting their tails but can't make ends meet, and that, we have to take as a reality.

Corporations, the profits are at an all-time high; wages are at an all-time low. We ought to have a better balance than that. I think that they should take comfort in the fact that we are dedicated to working on it, and I think

that there is some sense of corporate responsibility that will also level the playing field.

Mr. EVANS. Mr. Speaker, I say to the gentleman that I really have enjoyed this topic. I guess it is a topic that, like in his district and my district, it always comes down to about the Benjamins and always comes down to what exactly—I liked his analysis about the rules, that he started out relating to football games or whatever sport it is, there are some rules.

I do think some people really wonder, from an economic justice standpoint, how they fit into this particular situation. I guess the point is does the gentleman have any sense that you think—and you visit with the President—to your knowledge, that: “You have got a fine document; I strongly support it, the solutions that are addressed.” Does the gentleman sense from either him or his administration that they are going to take up anything that you see there in terms of discussion?

I yield to the gentleman from Louisiana.

Mr. RICHMOND. Not yet. Not yet is the short answer.

Let me say this, Representative EVANS, as I close. You mentioned that where we are from it is all about the Benjamins, which means the Ben Franklins, the money dedicated to the resources.

Far too often—and I challenge a lot of the norms and customs and sayings in our community that I think are harmful. One of the sayings we used to hear a lot was, “if it doesn't make dollars, it doesn't make sense,” which means that, if it makes money, it makes sense.

□ 2030

But the true saying should be: if it only makes dollars, then it doesn't make sense.

There has to be something else to it besides just corporations making as much as they possibly can. There still has to be some sort of community obligation that goes along with it to make the communities you are in a little bit better, whether it is the schools; whether it is the housing; whether it is the streets, the roads, the bridges, all of those things.

So when you start talking about our infrastructure, the question becomes: Are corporations paying their fair share? They benefit from our labor, they benefit from our consumers, they benefit from a whole bunch of things. But if it is only about the dollars for them, then this country has lost its soul, which is why we are having this conversation, because we have to save it from itself.

And it is not the first time this country has lost its soul. During slavery, during Jim Crow, during segregation, there were many people who woke up every day, went to church, prayed to the Lord, and then at the end of the day went right back to perpetuate Jim

Crow, segregation, slavery, racism, and all of those things. But it takes brave people to stand up and call it for what it is.

If you don't diagnosis the problem, you will never find a cure for it. So even in this House, we have people who claim to be the Christian right or the religious right who will say and espouse very hateful and racist things, all in the guise of religion.

But it is our duty as the CBC, and me as the chair, to remind people, one, that we are better than that, and, two, we have done an awful lot of despicable things in this country and blamed it on religion or blamed it on the Lord and don't blame religion or the Lord for wicked men. It is our obligation to make sure that we call it when we see it and we continue to fight for the least of these. Because the least of these can't afford lobbyists. They can't run commercials on TV congratulating people. They can't run commercials on TV opposing candidates. All they can do is continue to bust their tails every day to try to put a roof over their head, food on their table, and all of those things.

Mr. EVANS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his knowledge and his information, and I hope that it has been very helpful on this subject of economic justice in the Black community.

Mr. Speaker, in terms of the Congressional Black Caucus Special Order, I want to yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, during his State of the Union address, President Trump was quick to tout how the unemployment rate among black Americans dropped to 6.8 percent in December 2017—the lowest level ever recorded since the Bureau of Labor Statistics first began tracking unemployment numbers by race in 1972. However, President Trump's rosy narrative ignores a host of other facts that paint a very different picture for members of the black community under the new administration.

For one, President Trump's statement ignores important context surrounding this figure. From January to December 2017 under President Trump, black unemployment dropped 1 percentage point. Comparatively, under President Obama, unemployment among black Americans dropped by 1 percentage point during the same period in 2016; then by 1.9 points in 2015; then by 1.5 points in 2014; and then by 1.8 points in 2013. We must not forget that it was President Obama who pulled our country out of the biggest economic downturn since the Great Recession, the effects of which we are still benefitting from to this day. Ultimately, in January 2018, we saw a huge jump in unemployment among the black community to 7.7 percentage points.

The unemployment rate is not the only important indicator for economic health. Average wealth is an important metric, and one that points to a larger problem within our country. For example, for every \$100 in wealth accumulated by an average white family, the average black family can expect to only have accumulated \$5.04. For every \$100 in income

earned by the average white family, black families earn just \$57.30 on average. This wealth disparity has serious implications for housing, education, social mobility, and other factors that impact future earnings and wealth. Yet, in the face of these economic indicators, President Trump still proposes making drastic cuts to federal programs that help vulnerable segments of our population to escape poverty.

Mr. Speaker, access to wealth is more important than simply providing the means to purchase goods and services. Wealth enables families to grow without the hindrance of debt, gain access to safer neighborhoods and better schools, and become more equipped to pay for better education. In the absence of this, you see what we are witnessing within the black community—a racial wealth gap that continues to widen as time marches on. We need to overcome the economic disparities that have plagued the black community for generations and create new opportunities to lift our most vulnerable out of poverty.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, thank you Congressman EVANS for yielding and for anchoring this very important special order on the state of economic inequality in the United States, especially regarding its citizens of color.

The President would have us believe he is bringing the country together and growing the economy for all Americans but this could not be further from the truth.

First and foremost, Trump has nothing to do with the African-American unemployment rate being at its current level.

The President inherited a strong and rescued economy, including the downward trend in black unemployment from President Obama.

The African-American unemployment rate was cut in half during the Obama Administration.

The African-American unemployment rate actually jumped nearly one percentage point in January 2018, right after President Trump took credit for it being the lowest on record.

During the Obama era, the economy added 15 million new jobs, the black unemployment rate dropped and the high school graduation rate for African Americans soared.

The members of the CBC are here to tell the American people: "Stay Woke, Don't Be Fooled."

The racial wealth gap is much larger than the wage or income gap by race.

Average wealth for white families is seven times higher than average wealth for black families.

Worse still, median wealth (wealth for the family in the exact middle of the overall distribution—wealthier than half of all families and less-wealthy than half) for white households is twelve times higher than median African-American wealth.

Black-white wage gaps are larger today than they were in 1979.

Young African-American women have been hardest hit since 2000.

The wage gap for African-American men was 22.2 percent in 1979; in 2015 it was 31 percent.

Wage gaps are growing primarily because of discrimination and racial differences in skills and worker characteristics.

Declining unionization has also had a role in the growing African-American-white wage gap, particularly for men newly joining the workforce.

African Americans have been disproportionately affected by the growing gap between pay and productivity.

Not only are the President's policies divisive along racial and cultural lines, they also serve to further increase economic inequality due to their clear design in favor of the wealthiest among us at the expense of everyone else.

Trump's billionaire tax heist robs the U.S. Treasury of \$1.5 trillion in resources that could be invested in economic growth in underserved communities.

Trump has proposed eliminating programs that help minority businesses and that help minority communities access bank lending.

Trump has opposed increasing the minimum wage and eliminating labor protections for middle and lower income workers in the black community.

Trump has proposed doubling down on mass incarceration and the war on drugs, which drains the African-American labor pool.

Trump has taken every opportunity to harm health care for African-Americans from sabotaging the ACA to ending Medicaid as we know it.

Donald Trump is no friend to African-Americans' pocket book.

Trump also wants you to believe that he wants a bipartisan infrastructure plan.

"Stay Woke; don't be fooled."

Trump's proposal is yet another giveaway to his wealthy friends.

Instead of providing a robust federal investment in our infrastructure, including roads, bridges, mass transit, schools and broadband, Trump wants to give tax incentives to wealthy firms and individuals to build infrastructure that will cost the middle and lower income Americans money to use.

Instead of making it easier for state and local governments to invest in needed projects, he will make it more expensive for them to do so by reducing the federal cost share.

A recent National Urban League report titled "Protect Our Progress" gives a detailed look at the conditions of African Americans today.

The report suggested that the nation should invest in a "Main Street Marshall Plan" that would ensure that the gains made by African-Americans during the Obama administration aren't lost.

The plan includes expanding pre-K, increasing the number of college students receiving Pell grants, increasing the minimum wage and summer youth employment programs and incentivizing more doctors to accept Medicaid.

But we are in a climate where the current administration is looking to make cuts in many of these areas.

As it has for more than a decade, the Urban League used its Equality Index to track how close black America has gotten to white America in five major areas: education, health, social justice, economics and civic engagement.

There was not much change between 2015 and 2016 in the five areas the Urban League measures.

For this reason, the overall 2017 Equality Index of Black America was 72.3 percent, compared to 72.2 percent the year before.

An index of 100 percent would mean full equality in the particular measure between African-Americans and whites.

The biggest increase came in the area of education, which rose from 77.4 percent in 2015 to 78.2 percent in 2016.

In economics, African-Americans went from an equality index rate of 56.2 percent in 2015 to 56.5 percent in 2016.

In healthcare, the equality index between African-American and white Americans went from 79.4 to 80 percent between 2015 and 2016.

The only decrease came in social justice, from 60.9 to 57.4 percent.

In the category of civic engagement, African Americans actually surpass whites, according to the Urban League, with the number between 2015 and 2016 remaining at 100.6 percent.

As for Hispanics, there was a bigger increase in the overall Equality Index, from 77.9 percent in 2015 to 78.4 percent in 2016.

The Urban League also ranked the 70 metropolitan areas from the smallest gap in unemployment between African Americans and whites (and Hispanics and whites) to the largest gap.

For African Americans, the area with the smallest black-white unemployment gap was San Antonio-New Braunfels, TX, where the African Americans unemployment rate was 6.4 percent (down 1.9 percentage points from the previous year).

The white rate was 4.5 percent (down 0.4 percentage points).

The area with the largest gap was Milwaukee-Waukesha-West Allis, WI, where the unemployment rate for African Americans was 13.8 percent, while just 2.7 percent for whites.

In income inequality, Riverside-San Bernardino-Ontario, CA for the third consecutive year had the smallest difference between African Americans median household income and white median household income.

The city with the biggest income gap was Minneapolis-St. Paul-Bloomington, MN-WI, where the chasm was 41 cents for African Americans for every dollar earned by a white person.

For both African Americans and Hispanics, the area with the highest median household income was Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD-WV, at \$68,054 for blacks and \$69,481 for Hispanics.

It also had the highest white household income at \$112,177.

Mr. Speaker, our nation still has a long way to go before we achieve economic equality for all its citizens.

THE RIGHT TO LIFE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SMUCKER). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. KING) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege and honor to address you here on the floor of the United States House of Representatives, and I appreciate the honor and the privilege to do that.

Mr. Speaker, I came to the floor here tonight to talk to you and address the body about the issue that is so important to so many millions of Americans, and that is the issue of life, the issue of protecting innocent, unborn human life that doesn't have the ability to speak out for itself, doesn't have the ability to scream for its own mercy, but it

does have the ability to squirm and move and belch and do all the things that we do outside the womb and can feel pain, a beating heart, and a throbbing heart of a heartbeat.

I mentioned this on the floor here a couple weeks ago of an ultrasound that was sent to me with a little baby with 158 beats per minute.

I would take people through some of the pro-life legislation that has been moved or attempted to be moved here in the United States Congress, Mr. Speaker. I would take you back to 1973 and *Roe v. Wade* and *Doe v. Bolton*. Those two Supreme Court cases, working in conjunction with each other, essentially translated into abortion on demand. We saw abortions go from about 35,000 abortions a year in America, a number that I would say I thought was horrible then, to something like 1.6 million abortions in America, now ratcheted down with the weight of the conscience of our society to some number about 1 million or maybe a little bit less than 1 million.

Mr. Speaker, we don't get to count that difference between 1.6 million, roughly the peak, and a little under 1 million as 600,000 babies saved every year. Instead, it goes on our conscience the other way. That is a cumulative total of 60 million babies who have been sacrificed at the alter of this subject called pro-choice, judicial activism.

I remind you, Mr. Speaker, that human life is protected in our United States Constitution. It is protected under the 14th Amendment, and we have a constitutional right here in Congress to protect and defend life. In fact, I believe we have a duty to protect and defend life.

So I would first take us to that case of *Roe v. Wade*, and *Doe v. Bolton*, and the two cases taken together, January 22, 1973, and we have marched every year since then, including just last month on January 19.

But essentially this: *Roe v. Wade* was a case that was built on several Supreme Court precedents, but the one that strikes me the most is the *Griswold v. Connecticut* case. That was back in the mid 1960s sometime, maybe 1964, where Connecticut had outlawed contraceptives. They were a strong Catholic State at the time, and so they outlawed contraceptives.

Griswold went to court and said: No. We are married. We should be able to buy contraceptives, and the State of Connecticut shouldn't interfere in that.

So the Supreme Court manufactured this thing called a right to privacy, which was the privacy was protected by contraceptive activities within the marriage. So that case went in as a precedent case that established the right to privacy.

And then there was a follow-up case, and that would be the *Eisenstadt* case, that said: Well, it doesn't matter whether you are married, you have got a right to privacy whether you are

married or not, so you should be able to buy contraceptives if you are cohabiting rather than being joined together in holy matrimony. The Supreme Court found in their favor in that case.

And then, not that long later, 1973, here comes *Roe v. Wade* and *Doe v. Bolton*. *Roe v. Wade* says: Well, there is a right to privacy, so I guess if we are not going to interfere with reproductive choices of married couples or non-married couples, then we are not going to interfere with whether they want to terminate the life of that innocent, beautiful, miraculous little baby.

So they came down with the decision that a right to privacy was more important than the right to life. And on this floor, Mr. Speaker, I brought this issue up numerous times to remind the body that our Declaration of Independence articulated this very clearly. It laid out the parameters for our Constitution. Our Constitution reflects those parameters in the Declaration.

So there is a right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. And those are prioritized rights. The priority is this: life is paramount. It can't be subordinate to anybody's liberty, and somebody's pursuit of happiness can't trample on anyone's liberty or their life.

Yet the Court decided this right to privacy, this liberty, this right to privacy that was manufactured in *Griswold v. Connecticut* in roughly a decade or less earlier, was more important than the right of the life of the innocent unborn.

And then they got into the concept of viability. But *Doe v. Bolton* is the one that gave essentially the broad license. The viability piece says: Well, can a baby survive at the end of the first trimester? No. The end of the second trimester? Probably not. But into the third trimester? That became more likely.

Yet even that didn't protect that innocent, unborn baby because *Doe v. Bolton* put these exceptions in here for the health of the mother, and that was defined and included the physical health, the emotional health, the psychological health, the familial health, and age-related factors.

So if you get into the emotional health, that is impacted by mental stability. It is impacted by cash flow. It is impacted by anything. What it amounts to is that this long list carried within it someplace there that anybody could look at it and say: Well, that's a license to abort a baby under any circumstance anytime, provided that the mother just simply wants the abortion.

And we, just a little over a year ago, saw a President leave office who stood on the floor of the Illinois State Senate and, multiple times, took the position that if a woman goes to an abortionist and wants an abortion, if the baby survives the abortion, she still has a right to a dead baby.

And by the way, all the people speaking over here a little bit ago all voted